

REMARKS

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-7 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. At claim 1, lines 7 and 8, "network group containing said computer/second database" is indefinite. It is not clear how a network group can contain a database. This rejection can be satisfied by amending "containing" at lines 7 and 8 to --contained within--.

Applicant has amended the claims accordingly.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 2, 5, 7 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Boyd.

The Examiner states that Boyd teaches (independent claims 1 and 8) a method and system for providing online networking groups, the method comprising: registering three or more users by asking them to store information in user profile database **213** (para. [0064] and [0085-0086]), which reads on entering a profile and a second profile reads on entering a profile and a second profile (and a third profile) into a computer database, and creating a networking group (all three or more users/ members) containing (contained within) said computer database; and a first user forming and posting an invitation to a networking meeting to two or more other users ([**0049** and **0024**]), the selection preferences and criteria including that the attendees be intellectual property lawyers ([**0031**]), the invitation being placed in invitation database **211**, which reads on comparing said profile and said second profile (comparing both user profiles to the selection preferences and criteria)*, moving said second profile into a second database (invitation database **211**) is said second profile and said second profile contain same professions and same areas of practice (intellectual property

lawyers), and creating a network group (the invited members) contained in said second database (invitation database **211**).

Amended Claim 1 requires that the networking group network online. As stated in the patent application the reason for this is that so a person within a networking group does not have to leave their home and can be part of a networking group wherein they are. Boyd relates solely to a system, which allows users to send invitations to others to set up a meeting either at a restaurant, golf club, etc. As stated at col. 2, para. 17, the system allows individuals to schedule a time and place for a meeting for the purpose of business or personal networking. The network meetings are a dinner or golf outing as stated in paragraph 20. The system of Boyd allows an individual to meet at a specified time and place. Therefore, claim 1 is not anticipated or obvious over Boyd.

Amended Claim 8 requires that the members of the network group communicate online. As stated above, Boyd only discloses sending invitations for networking online the actual communication and networking occurs at a restaurant or other physical place and does not occur online. Therefore, claim 8 is not anticipated or obvious over Boyd.

The Examiner states that Boyd also teaches at the citations given above claim 2 (where the invitation reads on a referral). Boyd also teaches claims 5 (**[0073]**) and 7 (**[0065-0066]**).

Claim 2 depends on claim 1 and further requires providing referrals online between members in the networking group. Boyd does not relate to providing referrals. Boyd relates to providing invitations to a meeting. Amended claim 2 requires that referrals are given online. For these reasons and the reasons stated above, claim 2 is not anticipated or obvious over Boyd.

Claim 5 depends on claim 1 and requires removing members from the networking group who do not provide referrals to other members in the networking group, or meet a minimum number of referrals. Boyd does not relate to providing referrals and further Boyd does not discuss removing members from a networking group who do not provide referrals to other members. For these reasons and the reasons stated above, claim 5 is not anticipated or obvious over Boyd.

Claim 7 depends on claim 1 and requires that the profiles comprise: name, address, contact information, profession and territory. For the reasons stated above for claim 1 claim 7 is not anticipated or obvious over Boyd.

The Examiner has rejected claims 3, 4 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Boyd.

Boyd does not teach (claims 3 and 4) rewards or positive incentives commensurate with the number of invitations/referrals provided by a user. However, Boyd does teach negative incentives for a user who does not make invitations or violate invitation rules ([**0053**, **0073-0075** and **0111**]). Because the system would work only if user make as well as honor invitations, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time of the invention, to add the teachings of Boyd rewards or positive incentives commensurate with the number of invitations/referrals provided by a user.

Claim 3 depends on claims 1 and 2 and further provides providing rewards or incentives to the members of the networking group who provide the most referrals in the networking group. As stated by the Examiner, Boyd does not teach providing incentives to its members for referrals. Further, since Boyd only suggests a one time

meeting, there is no reason to provide incentives. For these reasons and the reason stated above, claim 3 is not obvious over Boyd.

Claim 4 depends on claims 1 and 2 and further provides a point system relating to the number of referrals each member in the networking group gives to another member.

Boyd does not teach (claim 6) meeting by video/audio conferencing. However, Boyd does teach a system with video monitors and cameras (**0094** and **0101**). Because Boyd teaches that the purpose of the reference invention is to make the best use of a user's time (**[0006]**), it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time of the invention, to add the teachings of Boyd) meeting by video/audio conferencing.

Amended Claim 6 depends on claims 1 and 2 and further requires communicating with members online via video or audio conferencing. Boyd does not teach members communicating online. Boyd only teaches that a member can send an invitation to another person inviting them to meet somewhere to then network. For this reason and the reasons stated above, claim 6 is not obvious over Boyd.

Applicant believes that the application is now in condition for allowance.

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